

"Old Bedsteads, Anyone?"

Text: Deut. 3:11, "For only Og the king of Bashan was left of the remnant of the Rephaim; behold, his bedstead was a bedstead of iron; is it not in Rabbah of the Ammonites? Nine cubits was its length, and four cubits its breadth, according to the common cubit."

Philippians 3:14, "I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus."

Much ado is made over the size of people and things in our present day world. For instance, in sports, the biggest and heaviest linemen are sought for football teams. In basketball, the teams are looking for the fellows who are well over six feet. In business and industry everyone is trying to make and package things in large economy sizes.

Well in the Bible there is a story of a man who was the last in a long line of giants of a certain tribe. This group was known as the Rephaim, and the story is found in Deuteronomy 3: Moses is telling this story and we read, (read 3:1-11)

"For only Og the king of Bashan was left of the remnant of the Rephaim; behold, his bedstead was a bedstead of iron; is it not in Rabbah of the Ammonites? Nine cubits was its length, and four cubits its breadth, according to the common cubit."

The bedstead referred to in this scripture was considered by most authorities to be not a bedstead as we know it, but instead a burial sarcophagus. Using the rule of thumb that a cubit was 18 inches in length, this sarcophagus would have been 13½ feet long and 6 feet wide. Thus we can see that it would have been made for a large man.

From this story we can determine that only Og remained of a tribe of giants and he was also destroyed, and the only thing left was his iron bedstead. We are looking back over ancient history, and even way back then, the inclination was to strive for vast kingdoms and empires, for wealth and to amass fortunes. Og had reached the heights in power and riches. Yet, he was overthrown by the Israelites and it was now their turn to be the figurative giants of that part of the world.

A prominent ~~xxxxxx~~ wealthy man died not too long ago and someone in striving to determine just how much money he had remarked, "How much did he leave." Someone else answered the question by saying, "He left everything." Yes, ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ everything is left at the end of every life, and sometimes the only thing left to mark the passing of someone is only an old iron bedstead.

Contrast the life of Og with the life Paul tells about in our scripture where he states, "For Jesus' sake I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as refuse, in order that I may gain Christ and be found in Him." Paul is stating that there is nothing more worthwhile in the world than serving the master Jesus Christ. All else is nothing compared to this.

He goes on to day, "I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call ~~xx~~ of God in Christ Jesus," and he urges others of the same mind to do likewise.

Daniel Webster made the statement, "If we work upon marble it will perish, If we work upon brass, time will efface it. If we rear temples, they will crumble to dust. But if we work upon men's immortal minds, if we imbue them with high principles, with the just fear of God and love of their fellowmen, we engrave on those tablets something which no time can efface, and which will brighten and brighten to all eternity."

This is what Paul was getting at. He was saying that we should leave behind us all of those worthless monuments we tend to build to ~~xxxxxx~~ ourselves, and we must point ourselves and others to Almighty God through showing them Jesus Christ. How many people do you know that are all wrapped up in a monument that will left behind? How many of us are so concerned with things and objects that are the equivalent of the old iron bedstead of King Og?

Some years ago a London newspaper offered prizes for the best answers to the question, "Who are the happiest people on earth?"

The following were adjudged the four best answers:

The craftsman or artist whistling over a job well done
little child building sand castles
A mother, after a busy day, bathing her baby
A doctor who has finished a difficult and dangerous operation, and saved
a human life.

Notice there are no playboys, no millionaires, no international jet setters, no kings, no hollywood stars, no people high on drugs or other stimulants. Just plain things that require work and love. This in essence was what Paul was trying to tell these people in Philippi. He said, "Join in imitation me, and mark those who so live as you have an example in us." He was beseeching others to follow him in this type of living. He was telling them that we can look at the lives of others and we can measure their Christianity by their lives.

This past week as I worked in the hospital as the Chaplain of the week, representing the Butler Area Council of Churches, I was reminded of a home in which I worked ~~xxxxxx~~ some years ago. The couple who lived in this house had no children. But they adopted every stray cat and dog that came around. In fact they even went to distant states to pick up dogs and cats their friends had collected and brought them back to Butler and nursed them back to health. The woman told me they spent between 40 and 50 dollars every month just in medicine for these animals.

On Thursday I called on a woman who did not belong to a church and who was very upset because she had to be in the hospital. As I listened to her story it soon became evident why she was upset. The story is that about 18 years ago she and her husband took into their home a baby boy as a foster child. The boy was ~~xxxxxx~~ afflicted with cerebral palsy. ~~xxxxxx~~ They gave this boy all of their love and their concern. After a certain length of time, the real mother of the boy decided she wanted h place in an institution, and wanted to sever all ties with him. The woman and her husband checked into adopting the boy, and in the process were told that if the boy were placed in an institution, he would ~~have~~ in all probability die within six months. The reason being that he had grown to love them in

his own special way. They had given him care and concern that he had never had before. Eventually they were able to adopt the boy and the mother was glad to be rid of him. She told me the boy is now 18 and he is only about this big, (about 2 feet). She said he knows them and responds to them and is able to say hello. But the boy requires all of her time and efforts as well as much of her husbands time. This is why she was so upset that she had to be in the hospital with a broken back, and was so anxious to get home. But the real clincher was when she told me that she spent between 40 and 50 ^{a month} dollars in medicines for this boy.

Here are two cases in which the same amount of money was being spent for medicines. One was for animals, the other for humans. ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~
~~anxxthexpxpxpx~~ Why would a person who has no children otherwise, tie herself down to a 7 day a week, 24 hour a day job of raising someone else's afflicted child; when this was not something she had to do? Why on the other hand would a person lavish so much love on animals, many of which it would have been more humane to destroy, and neglect to ~~xxxxxxk~~ use that money and time in helping some other human? I love animals, but I believe it is more important to care for the afflicted humans of the world than for the animals.

~~Oneonanonesxworkingxtoleavebehindox~~

But you see we all are involved in building a monument of some kind. Different people place different priorities on what is really important to them. We all probably have some old iron bedsteads in our lives that we should rid ourselves of. ~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXdixxxfixxxexxxpXXXXXX~~
~~differencepxpxpxxwaxxxnnnokxhpxhukxfxxkxxaxaxafxoy~~ Paul also reminds us of this when he says, "Many of whom I told you and now tell you even with tears, live as enemies of the cross of Christ. Their end is destruction, their god is the belly, and they glory in their shame, with minds set on earthly things. But our commonwealth is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will change our lowly body to be like His glorious body, by the power which enables him even to subject all things to himself."

The earth is full of the goodness of the Lord;
By the word of the Lord were the heavens made.
Rejoice in the Lord, O ye righteous: for praise is
due ST. PAUL'S UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST for the upright.

BUTLER, PENNSYLVANIA
SECOND SUNDAY AFTER EASTER APRIL 28, 1974

REV. RALPH C. LINK, PASTOR
MRS. VELMA COLLINS, ORGANIST
MR. RALPH COOPER, CHOIR DIRECTOR
BILL WATTERSON, STEVE BASEMORE - ACOLYTE

ORDER OF WORSHIP 11:00 A.M.
PRELUDE MUSIC: "ANANTE PASTORALE" IN A" SPENCE
"PRELUDE SERIEGE" STRICKLAND

SILENT PRAYER

*PROCESSIONAL HYMN NO. 177 "SING WITH ALL THE SONS OF GLORY"
*ABSCIRPTION - CHORAL AMEN

*EXHORTATION

*CONFESSION (IN UNISON) "GREAT GOD, FATHER OF OUR
LORD JESUS CHRIST, YOU HAVE PROMISED TO RECEIVE US
WHEN WE COME TO YOU. WE CONFESS THAT WE HAVE SINNED
AGAINST YOU IN THOUGHT, WORD AND DEED. WE HAVE DIS-
OBEDIED YOUR LAW. WE HAVE NOT LOVED YOU OR OUR NEIGHBORS
AS WE SHOULD. FORGIVE US, O GOD, AND GRANT THAT
WE MAY LIVE AND SERVE YOU IN NEWNESS OF LIFE; THROUGH
JESUS CHRIST OUR LORD. AMEN."

*KYRIE (CHOIR, CONGREGATION AND PASTOR)

*ASSURANCE OF PARDON - CHORAL AMEN

*PRAISE

*PASTOR: "O LORD OPEN OUR LIPS
*PEOPLE: AND OUR MOUTH SHALL SHOW FORTH THY PRAISE.

*DOXOLOGY NO. 551

SCRIPTURE LESSON: PHILIPPIANS 3: 7-21

HYMN NO. 254 "JESUS, I LIVE TO THEE"

*AFFIRMATION OF OUR FAITH (APOSTLES' CREED)

*GLORIA PATRI

*CALL TO PRAYER

*PASTOR: THE LORD BE WITH YOU.

*PEOPLE: AND WITH THY SPIRIT.

*PASTOR: LET US PRAY.

*PRAYER AND PRAYER RESPONSE

OFFERING

OFFERTORY "ADAGIO CANTABILE" BEETHOVEN
ANTHEM: "I WALKED INTO THE GARDEN" BY WEAVER

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SERMON: "OLD BEOSTEAS, ANYONE?"

PRAYER AND LORD'S PRAYER

*HYMN OF DEDICATION NO. 469 "I NEED THEE EVERY HOUR"

*BENEDICTION AND THREE FOLD AMEN

ORGAN POSTLUDE: "MAESTOSO" MARTIN

----- *CONGREGATION STANDING -----

THE LOVELY FLOWERS ON THE ALTAR HAVE BEEN PLACED

BY MR. & MRS. CUSTEAD IN MEMORY OF MR. & MRS. JOHN

REINHOLD - "PARENTS". (MR. & MRS. HERMAN CUSTEAD)

THOSE SERVING AS USHERS TODAY ARE: RAYMOND COVERT,

ROBBIE VINROE, BRIAN PEARE, ROBERT DELLEN, CHRIS

PAGE.

ELDER ARTHUR SNYDER WILL REPRESENT COUNCIL AT THE
DOOR TODAY.

MRS. LINDA McMILLIN, JANE AND ELIZABETH ARMSTRONG
WILL BE IN THE NURSERY TODAY.

HOSPITALIZED: MR. GEORGE EICHORN, ALLEGHENY GEN.
HOSP., PITTS.; HAROLD CAMPBELL, MRS. MATTHEW
DIEKSON (HELEN) - BCWH.

CONGRATULATIONS TO MR. & MRS. ROLAND THOMPSON - NEW
GRANDSON - BOY BORN TO MR. & MRS. CLYDE CURRY - BCWH.
REMEMBER MAY 8 - MOTHER AND DAUGHTER TURKEY DINNER -
6:00 - THE CIRCLE SQUARES (MARY MARTHA CIR.) ARE IN
CHARGE OF THE PROGRAM AND WILL ENTERTAIN US WITH
THEIR FAMOUS SURPRISE TALENT. MAKE A DATE NOW WITH
YOUR MOTHER, DAUGHTER, NIECE OR JUST A FRIEND. MEAT
AND DESSERT AND BEVERAGE WILL BE PROVIDED - YOU WILL
NEED A TUREEN AND TABLE SERVICE.

► TUESDAY - 7:30 - NATIONAL DAY OF PRAYER IN OUR CHURCH.
DAY DECLARED BY THE CONGRESS IN WHICH THEY ARE ASKING
FOR A DAY OF HUMILIATION, FASTING AND PRAYER AND TO
TURN TO GOD AND ASK HIS GUIDANCE AND HELP IN OUR
COUNTRY.

► WEDNESDAY - 7:30 - CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING

THURS. - THE NEWSLETTER WILL BE PUBLISHED - PLEASE
HAVE ALL MATERIAL IN BY WEDNESDAY.

ATTENDANCE LAST SUNDAY - 225

THE CONFIRMATION PICTURES ARE IN THE OFFICE - THEY
ARE BEAUTIFUL - SEE BEA IN THE OFFICE - \$4.00 EACH.

TUES. & THURS. - WORK NIGHT IN THE APARTMENT AT 110
WALKER AVE.

MAY 5 - LAKE ERIE ASSOCIATION MEETING - LOIS WOGAN
AND ANN WILLIAMS - DELEGATES - ST. MARKS - NEW HAMBURG.

No

work

TUES

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Ralph C. Link
153 Keck Road
Sarver, Pa. 16055
(412) 352-1103

Born: April 9, 1929, Pittsburgh, Pa.

Married: December 15, 1951

Wife: Shirley Margaret Neill

Born: December 8, 1930, Pittsburgh, Pa.

Children: Ralph Dale Link, born May 11, 1955, Pittsburgh, Pa.

Lloyd Alan Link, born May 28, 1958, Pittsburgh, Pa.

Nancy Lynn Link, born March 15, 1961, Butler, Pa.

SCHOOLING:

Graduated from Perry High School, Pittsburgh, Pa.
June 1947

Lay Ministry School, Penn West Conference of United
Church of Christ, September 1965 to May 1969

Commissioned Lay Minister June 1969

Lancaster Theological Seminary, Lancaster, Pa.,
September 1970

Graduated from Lancaster Theological Seminary May 1974

Ordained to Christian Ministry March 10, 1974

PASTORATES:

As Lay Minister: short term, 1 month or less in
various churches 1965 to 1967

Emlenton Lamartine Charge of United Church of Christ
1967 to 1969

Short term in various churches 1970 until Seminary
entrance July 1970

July 1970 to December 1973 Student Pastor at Trinity
Charge, New Bloomfield, Duncannon, Pa., Penn Central
Conference, United Church of Christ

December 1973 to present, St. Paul's United Church of
Christ, Butler, Pa., Penn West Conference, United
Church of Christ

PERSONAL TESTIMONY

OF

Ralph C. Link

I am the youngest of five children. I was born just prior to the onset of the Depression. Our family was very poor. My father was an alcoholic and my mother was a very religious person who was searching for the Lord. During my childhood she did her best to teach me the things of the Lord. Later in life she came to a personal relationship with Him.

I grew up in the Evangelical and Reformed Church where salvation by grace alone was not preached nor taught. I knew all about Jesus, what He did, how He lived, His miracles, His death and resurrection, but I didn't know Him personally.

My life had many ups and downs and all the while I was attending church and striving with my good works to please God. At a very low point in my life when we were deeply in debt and my wife and three children were all ill, I came to the crossroads. I watched a Billy Graham Crusade on television from some distant city and the message he preached seemed to be directed right at me. I wrestled with making that commitment to Christ, but didn't. The next afternoon and evening at work on the 4 to 12 shift I came to the conclusion that I needed to make that commitment to Christ. It seemed like there was no other choice if life was to have any meaning. That night when I came home from work at 1:00 A.M., I laid face down on the living room floor and told God that I couldn't live my life in my own strength and I accepted the gift of salvation from my Savior Jesus Christ. My life has never been the same.

Through several meaningful circumstances I was called by God to serve Him in the Christian Ministry and to help spread that wonderful message of salvation through the shed blood of Jesus Christ. What a wonderful and rewarding time it has been and I give Him all the praise for my salvation and the opportunity to serve Him.

STATEMENT OF FAITH

OF

Ralph C. Link

I believe the Bible, both the Old and New Testaments to be the inspired inerrant Word of God. I believe the Bible is the complete revelation of His will for the salvation of men and it is the final authority for the Christian faith and life.

I believe in one God, who is eternally existent in three persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

I believe in the Diety of the Lord Jesus Christ that He is true God and true man. I believe that He was born of the Virgin Mary, that He lived in sinless life, that He performed the miracles recorded in Scripture, that He died on the cross as a sacrifice for our sins, that He bodily arose from the dead, that He ascended on high where He is at the right hand of Almighty God as our intercessor.

I believe in the Holy Spirit and that He comes and indwells each believer at the time of conversion. I believe that He lives in each believer to lead, to instruct, and to convict so that a believer may live a more godly life.

I believe that through the shed blood of Jesus Christ and through His resurrection, this is the only ground for justification and salvation for all who receive Him A Lord and Savior and to such as receive Him, they are born of the Holy Spirit and become children of God.

I believe water baptism and the Lord's Supper are ordinances of the Church but are not means of salvation.

I believe in the personal and premillennial and imminent coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.

I believe in the resurrection of the dead, for the believer to resurrection of life and joy with the Lord, for the unbeliever to resurrection of judgement and everlasting punishment.